

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-10

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INFO AMEMBASSY BELGRADE

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST

AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST

USMISSION GENEVA

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMCONSUL MUNICH

USMISSION NATO

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY PRAGUE

AMEMBASSY SOFIA

USDEL MBFR VIENNA

AMEMBASSY WARSAW

C O N F I D E N T I A L BERLIN 1797

GENEVA FOR USDEL SALT III AND DISARM DEL

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, GE, UR

SUBJ: GDR 25TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS: PAEANTO SOVIET-EAST
GERMAN TIES

BEGIN SUMMARY: GDR ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS, NOW IN THIRD
DAY. HAVE PROVIDED OCCASION FOR REAFFIRMATION OF
CLOSE SOVIET-EAST GERMAN TIES. SOVIET EMPHASIS ON DURABILITY
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OF THOSE TIES, IN CONTEXT OF EMPHASIS ON DEVELOPING

RELATIONSHIP WITH FRG, SUGGESTS BREZHNEV VISIT DESIGNED IN PART TO REASSURE HONECKER AND COLLEAGUES ON EVE OF FORTHCOMING VISIT TO MOSCOW BY FRG CHANCELLOR SCHMIDT. BREZHNEV ALSO DWELT ON US-SOVIET RELATIONS AND NEED FOR FURTHER PROGRESS IN VARIOUS DISARMAMENT FORUMS. END SUMMARY.

1. PRESENCE OF SOVIET PARTY LEADER BREZHNEV IN EAST BERLIN HAS ASSURED THAT GDR 25TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS OCTOBER 5-7 ARE IN FACT A SHOW OF SOVIET-EAST GERMAN SOLIDARITY. AS IN RECENT 30-YEAR ANNIVERSARIES IN PRAGUE, SOFIA AND BUDAPEST, GDR CELEBRATION PLAYED AS BILATERAL AFFAIR WITH USSR, RATHER THAN WARSAW PACT EVENT. HUNDREDS OF THOUSANDS TURNED OUT TO WAVE AND CHEER DURING BREZHEV'S TRIUMPHAL ENTRY INTO CITY ON SATURDAY AFTERNOON (OCTOBER 5). EBULLIENT ON ARRIVAL AT SCHOENEFELD AIRPORT, BREZHNEV WAS VISIBLY TIRED BEFORE END OF TWO-HOUR MOTORCADE.

2. BREZHNEV WAS ALSO AT CENTER OF ATTENTION AT SUNDAY EVENTS. AT LUNCHEON, HONECKER DECORATED HIM WITH ORDER OF KARL MARX (PREVIOUS FOREIGN LEADERS TO BE SO HONORED INCLUDE KHRUSHCHEV IN 1964, BULGARIA'S ZHIVKOV IN JANUARY 1974, AND FRENCH CP'S DUCLOS IN 1971, PLUS SOVIET MARSHALS YAKUBOVSKIY IN 1970 AND GRECHKO IN 1971). HONECKER AND BREZHNEV WERE ONLY SPEAKERS AT SUNDAY AFTERNOON MEETING OF SED CENTRAL COMMITTEE, COUNCIL OF STATE, COUNCIL OF MINISTERS, AND NATIONAL COUNCIL OF NATIONAL FRONT. BREZHNEV ALSO SHARED PLACE OF HONOR ON VIEWERS STANDS AT FREE DEMOCRATIC YOUTH (FDJ) TORCHLIGHT PARADE EVENING OCTOBER 6 AND DURING OCTOBER 7 MILITARY PARADE. LOW-LEVEL REPRESENTATIVES FROM OTHER EASTERN EUROPEAN COUNTRIES WENT LARGELY UNNOTICED.

3. IN THEIR SPEECHES BOTH HONECKER AND BREZHNEV DWELT NOT ONLY ON GDR ACHIEVEMENTS OF PAST QUARTER CENTURY BUT ALSO ON ESSENTIAL ROLE OF SOVIET UNION IN MAKING PROGRESS POSSIBLE AND ON DURABILITY OF GDR-SOVIET FRIENDSHIP. IN INTERNATIONAL SECTIONS, BOTH LEADERS ADDRESSED STANDARD THEMES SUCH AS SOVIET-US RELATIONS, NEED FOR EARLY COMPLETION OF CSCE, PROGRESS IN DISARMAMENT TALKS, AND RELATIONS WITH FRG. THERE WERE, HOWEVER, SUBTLE DIFFERENCES IN EMPHASIS ON SOME POINTS. WHEREAS
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BREZHNEV PAID PARTICULAR ATTENTION TO UPCOMING VISIT OF FRG CHANCELLOR SCHMIDT TO MOSCOW, NOTING SOVIET UNION PLACED GREAT HOPES ON OUTCOME OF VISIT FOR CONTINUITY IN IMPROVING RELATIONS DESPITE FRG LEADERSHIP CHANGE, HONECKER IMPLIED DIFFICULTIES IN FRG-GDR TIES BY MENTIONING "NEED FOR GOOD WILL FROM BOTH SIDES." ONLY BREZHNEV MENTIONED BERLIN, IN A PASSAGE POINTING OUT THAT SOME IN FRG WOULD LIKE TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF FOUR-POWER AGREEMENT BUT ASSERTING THAT

AGREEMENT IS TOO IMPORTANT TO BE MADE INTO POLITICAL FOOTBALL.

4. HONECKER APPLAUDED SOVIET-AMERICAN DETENTE BUT SPOKE ONLY IN GENERALITIES. BREZHNEV, ON OTHER HAND, DEVOTED CONSIDERABLE ATTENTION TO US-SOVIET RELATIONS AND NEED FOR MOVING AHEAD ON SALT AND MBFR. HE ALSO REFERRED TO MOSCOW'S UNGA PROPOSAL FOR PROTECTION OF ENVIRONMENT FROM MILITARY POLLUTION, CALLED FOR COMPLETE NUCLEAR-TEST-BAN AGREEMENT, AND ADVOCATED AGREEMENT ON BANNING AND DESTROYING CHEMICAL WEAPONS. THE SOVIET UNION IS ALSO READY--"AS I HAVE RECENTLY STATED" -- TO AGREE AT ANY MOMENT TO REMOVAL FROM MEDITERRANEAN OF ALL SOVIET AND US SHIPS AND SUBMARINES CARRYING NUCLEAR ARMS.

5. OTHER VARIATIONS ON COMMON THEME CAME IN TREATMENT OF CHINA. BREZHNEV'S REMARKS WERE MUCH MORE CONCILIATORY THAN THOSE OF HONECKER, WHO LINKED CHINESE LEADERSHIP TO "REACTIONARY CIRCLES OF NATO AND COMMON MARKET".

6. FDJ PARADE REPRESENTED POPULAR HIGHPOINT OF CELEBRATIONS, IN KEEPING WITH EMPHASIS ON GDR YOUTH IN HONECKER SPEECH. ALTHOUGH MARCHERS CHANTED SOLIDARITY FROM CHILE AND VIETNAM, NO ANTI-US PLACARDS IN EVIDENCE. GENERAL MOOD IMPRESSED MISSION OBSERVER AS FESTIVE RATHER THAN STRIDENT. HOUR-LONG MILITARY PARADE OCTOBER 7, INVOLVING GDR UNITS ONLY, CONSISTED OF APPROXIMATELY 4500-5000 TROOPS IN IMPRESSIVE DISPLAY OF LATEST TANK AND MISSILE EQUIPMENT IN GDR ARSENAL. (ALLIED PROTEST OF THIS VIOLATION OF DEMILITARIZED STATUS OF BERLIN REPORTED SEPTEL.)

7. COMMENT: JUST AS KHRUSHCHEV IN 1964 SIGNED FRIENDSHIP TREATY WITH ULBRICHT ON EVE OF HIS INTENDED VISIT TO
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BONN, CURRENT BREZHNEV VISIT TO EAST BERLIN, WITH ITS EXTRAORDINARY EMPHASIS ON DURABILITY OF SOVIET SUPPORT FOR GDR, SEEMS DESIGNED IN PART TO COUNTER ANY NERVOUSNESS HONECKER AND SED LEADERSHIP MAY BE EXPERIENCING AS SCHMIDT VISIT TO MOSCOW APPROACHES.

8. THERE HAVE PRESUMABLY BEEN SIDE CONSULTATIONS IN CONNECTION WITH FORTHCOMING SCHMIDT VISIT BUT FOREIGN MINISTER GROMYKO AND DEFENSE MINISTER GRECHKO HAVE PLAYED NO VISIBLE ROLE IN FESTIVITIES OTHER THAN AS BYSTANDERS. MORE ACTIVE INVOLVEMENT MAY BECOME APPARENT IF THERE IS COMMUNIQUE AT CONCLUSION OF BREZHNEV VISIT. KLEIN

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